

**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF STUDIES DONE ON
OPRAS, ITS GOVERNING POLICIES, SYSTEMS,
GUIDELINES AND PROCESSES AS APPLIED IN
THE TANZANIAN HEALTH SECTOR UNDER
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES**

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Glossary

BMAF –	Benjamin Mkapa HIV/AIDS Foundation
CHAI -	Clinton HIV/AIDS Initiative
CHMTS -	Capacity of Council Health Management Teams
FAO -	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
MOFEA -	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MOHEST -	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
MOHSW -	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
HIV/AIDS -	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HR -	Human Resources
HRD -	Human Resources Development
HRIS -	Human Resources Information System
HRH -	Human Resource for Health
HRM -	Human Resources Management
OPRA FORM-	Open Performance Review Appraisal Form
OPRAS -	Open Performance Reviews and Appraisal System
PMO-RALG -	Prime Minister's Office – Regional Administration and Local Governments
PMSs -	Performance Management Systems
PHSDP -	Primary Health Services Development Plan
PO-PSM -	President's Office – Public Service Management
UK -	United Kingdom
USAID -	United States Agency for International Development
US -	United States
SMART -	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Based
THRHCPC -	Tanzania Human Resources for Health Capacity Project

Executive summary

The Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) is an open, formal, and systematic procedure designed to assist both employers and employees in planning, managing, evaluating and realizing performance improvement in the organization with the aim of achieving organizational goals¹. The system was introduced for use in Public Service sector through the Public Service Act No. 8 of 2002, which was amended by Act No. 17 of 2007. The system replaced the old approach which the Tanzanian Government was using to manage and appraise performance of the public sector's employees. Unlike the previous approach, OPRAS is characterized with openness through feedback giving and frequent communication between supervisors and supervisees. The system is meant to promote effective performance and efficiency, and accountability.

The changes in planning, managing, and evaluating performance of public employees are in line with Public Service Management and Employment Policy (PSMEP) of 1998 and the Public Service Act No. 8 of 2002, both of which emphasize on institutionalization of result oriented management and meritocratic principles in the Public Service². Through the introduction of OPRAS, the Government demonstrated its aspiration to improve and enhance performance and service delivery to the public. OPRAS is a key accountability instrument for individual employees that emphasizes the importance of participation, ownership and transparency³.

The consultancy engagement to critically analyze studies that were done on OPRAS, its governing policies, systems, guidelines and processes was meant to assess applicability of the system in the public health sector under the Local Government Authorities in Tanzania. In more specific terms, the study was expected to: -

- a. Establish if the system, its associated policies, guidelines and processes can effectively work to manage performance in the public health sector
- b. Review and recommend if other than lacking know-how in how to use the OPRAS, general low level of awareness and complexity of the OPRAS form, there were other factors that contributed to slow adoption of OPRAS in the public health sector
- c. Recommend, for policy formulators' attention strategies to address identified gaps/weaknesses
- d. Suggest how should the strategies be introduced and implemented in order to bring about the required change
- e. Propose practical, results oriented and cost effective OPRAS training for health sector employees

¹ Johnsen, 2000

² <http://www.articlesbase.com>, May 4, 2010

³ <http://www.articlesbase.com>, May 4, 2010

- f. Propose a customized, practical and user friendly framework for the OPRAS form for the health sector.

At the conclusion of the assessment, the following observations were made: -

1. The use of the OPRAS in the public health sector for instituting and encouraging employees' performance is still not as effective.
2. The ineffectiveness of the system may not necessarily be embedded in its structure. The study recommends that there is a need for the sector to introduce and enhance performance culture. To do this, it is suggested that the sector works with other stakeholders to include a topic on performance in public service in college curriculums so that students get basic ideas on the concept before they turn into employees. In addition, the culture could be built through structured orientation programmes, improve infrastructure and recognize and reward performance. The sector could also borrow activities that are similar to its functions from the Government's blueprint for introducing performance culture in the phase II.
3. The assessment also recognized the need for the sector to simplify the OPRA form. This is essentially for addressing the concern among employees that the form is long and therefore time-consuming. Although the assessment does not uphold this view, still the sector can learn from how the teaching services and the police force simplified the OPRA form.
4. Similarly, there assessment observed that the sector needs to link OPRAS to individual employee productivity and adapting different approach to training in OPRAS

Until a plan to monitor and measure performance is in place, the sector should not re-introduce performance for pay.

To implement the recommendations made, the assessment is of the view that the sector should start with 'quick wins', which are defined as activities that may be embarked upon quickly and easily, without involving much of policy level discussions. These are identified as: -

1. Introducing orientation programs
2. Recruiting and deploying competitively
3. Using probation periods for newly recruited employees effectively
4. Training supervisors
5. Encouraging learning and training
6. Encouraging team work
7. Encouraging communication
8. Improving infrastructure
9. Recognizing and rewarding good performance
10. Designing tools to facilitate easy transfer of knowledge regarding OPRAS
11. Appointing OPRAS champions for the sector in each Local Authority

1. Introduction

The aims of the assignment were: -

- a. To assess effectiveness of performance management policy (policies), guidelines and processes used in the Tanzanian public health sector in order to establish if the policies are effective in meeting stated objectives
- b. To recommend the ways in which policy (policies), guidelines and processes could be aligned with the operational setbacks identified in two studies carried out in the past, whose theme was similar to the theme of this assignment, through proposing practical operational and policy short-term and long-term remedies for addressing them (i.e. the setbacks).

Recommendations, comments and findings from this study are expected to contribute in the efforts of the Government and Development Partners to strengthen the Local Government Authorities, but more particularly the Public Health Sector to attract, retain and motivate employees, and in the long run, assist the sector to realize its potential by embracing and sustaining a performance culture, driven and evaluated by clear performance targets.

Since OPRAS is a tool that is used across the Public Service, it is assumed that findings from this study can also meaningfully contribute to the on-going studies and researches by various stakeholders to accelerate the change process in the way the public sector plans, manages, monitors and evaluate performance.

An opportunity is taken to acknowledge contributions by different individuals who made production of this report possible. Special mention is made of Mr. Mr. S. Ngatunga, Deputy Secretary, Health Service Department, Public Service Commission, Ms. Miriam Mbaga, Principal Administrative Officer, Prime Minister's Office – Regional Administration, Mr. Mick Kiliba – Director, Management Service Division, President's Office – Public Management Services, Mr. Joseph Maginga, DHRO – Kilindi, Mr. Phillemon Magesa, DHRO – Biharamulo, Mr. Muhua Kapangawazi, DHRO – Mkuranga, Mr. Emilian Rwegasira Rugainamwa, DHRO – Tandahimba, Mr. Winslaus Lindi, DHRO – Kilwa, Ms. T.A Chando, DAP – Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and Ms. Prisca Lwangili, HRO – Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. The Benjamin Mkapa HIV/AIDS Foundation and the IntraHealth International, whose financial and logistical assistance made this study both, interesting and possible to undertake are also acknowledged.

Statement of Work

The assignment was commissioned to undertake the following: -

To review reports from two (2) studies which were done on the application of the Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) in the public health sector to grasp understanding of the conclusions, recommendations and comments made, particularly with regards to success and challenges of the OPRAS

- a. To review and evaluate policies, systems, guidelines and processes used to manage and measure performance. This was supposed to include OPRAS and any other systems that the study would establish were used to manage performance in the public sector
- b. To recommend suitable and affordable interventions to address weaknesses, including but not limited to complexities of the OPRAS forms, training methodologies and take advantage of opportunities
- c. To establish the systems' relevance and suitability to the public health sector in view of attracting, retaining, developing and motivating the health workforce
- d. To recommend a practical and cost effective operational system and procedures that could be used to train, monitor and evaluate the OPRAS in meeting their objectives with the focus of health facilities
- e. To identify and advise on practical approaches that should be employed to promote performance management systems as human resources tool to attract, retain, develop and motivate employees in the context of Tanzanian health sector
- f. To identify and advise how other human resource tool (i.e. learning, training etc) could combine with PMSs to increase productivity of the health sector in the country
- g. To assess if the existing PMSs are suitable for the re-introduction of Performance for Pay (P4P) strategy. In addition to this, the consultant was expected to assess and make recommendations with regards to balancing rewards and employees' development
- h. To identify stakeholders who could influence implementation of the recommendations the study would make, and advise which roles they should individually play
- i. To make recommendations on how the proposed changes could be introduced, implemented and sustained. The changes should include, but not limited to redesigning/simplification of the OPRA forms and designing framework on the OPRA form for the health workers

Guided by these terms of reference, at a policy level, the consultant was expected to deliver an analyzed policy brief that was expected to address the questions: -

- Can OPRAS, meaning its associated policies, guidelines and processes, work to effectively manage performance in the health sector?
- Other than lacking know-how in how to use the OPRAS, general low level of awareness and complexity of the OPRAS form, are there other factors that contributed to slow adoption of OPRAS by the health sector employees?
- What recommendations, if any, should be brought to the attention of policy formulators to address the identified gaps/weaknesses?

- How should the recommendations be introduced and implemented in order to bring about the required change?

At operational level, the consultant was expected to: -

- Propose practical, results oriented and cost effective OPRAS training for health sector employees
- Propose a customized, practical and user friendly framework for the OPRAS form for the health sector.

2. Methodology and Approach

The approach and methodology used to inform the study was a combination of desktop review of policies and regulations on human resources management and administration by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania as well as human resources journals and books. Additionally, the study used the Internet and carried out consultations and interviews with a sample of public service officials. In view of this, in addition to the reports from previous studies on OPRAS, documents listed on annex 1 of this report were reviewed.

In particular, the literature review was carried out in order to inform the study about: -

- The context in which the public sector in Tanzania practices employee performance management
- Employee performance management approaches used in other countries, in order to obtain lessons and experiences from which Tanzania could benefit

Furthermore, structured interviews with officials listed on annex 2 were undertaken in order to establish: -

- Level of application of OPRAS in the central government and local councils offices
- Adequacy of infrastructure to support the system
- Degree of awareness about OPRAS among public employees
- Challenges and opportunities for using OPRAS to achieve intended objectives

3. General discussion

In November 2008, through the Clinton HIV/AIDS Initiative (CHAI), a study to establish the implementation status of OPRAS in public health facilities across all regions in Tanzania was carried out. Using Mtwara and Lindi regions as representative samples of other regions of Tanzania, the study, through a report titled '*Baseline Study on Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) in Mtwara and Lindi Regions*' was produced. A second study titled '*OPRAS study*' was commissioned later on by CHAI to identify challenges towards implementation of the system in the public health sector.

Observations made in the two studies can be grouped into three categories, namely: -

- I. Implementation

- II. Policy
- III. Structure

1. The implementation category

The reports established that reasons listed below contribute to inability of OPRAS to contribute to improving performance at the individual employee and organizational level.

- a. Insufficient promotion (in view of training) and integration (into the planning process) of the system (OPRAS) and the form (OPRA form)
- b. Failure by the Public Health Sector to follow all the steps stipulated for performance planning process (i.e. refer to the Medium Term Strategic Planning & Budgeting Manual)
- c. Employees in the sector have not received sufficient training in the system
- d. As a result of poor training, quality of some of the forms filled is poor
- e. Supervisors and supervisees do not hold meeting regularly to discuss performance
- f. One of the reasons affecting performance is lack of clarity in view of reporting lines (i.e. who reports to who?)
- g. The form is not readily available
- h. In places where employees were trained in the system, reference materials were not provided, making it unable to guide themselves in times of need

2. Policy category

- a. Employees spend a substantial part of their time to work on reports, instead of delivering on their core responsibilities i.e. to attend customers
- b. Good performance is not differentiated from bad performance by the way of rewards (i.e. good performance is not rewarded)
- c. Poor HR management processes contribute to poor labor forecasting
- d. The sector is challenged in terms of capacity in finance and human resources.

3. Structure category

- a. The form is too long, and therefore time consuming, which discourages employees from processing it.

4. OPRAS: Background, definition, governing policies, systems, guidelines and processes

Prior to 2003/04, (employee performance) appraisals in Tanzania were done confidentially and subordinates did not have access to their supervisor's assessment⁴. The Public Service instituted OPRAS to replace all other systems that were previously used to assess the employees' performance within the Government and its institutions. The Medium Term Strategic Planning and Budgeting manual defines OPRAS as an extension of Strategic Plans, Action Plans and Budget to an individual level. Simply, this

⁴ Medium Term Strategic Planning & Budgeting Manual pg. 61

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means the system is used to cascade corporate level strategic objectives down to an employee. In general, OPRAS serves the following purposes: -

- Improving institutional performance by aligning the institutional plan to individual responsibilities.
- Establishing the environment of feedback, exchange and communication between supervisors and subordinates.
- Helping to identify the subordinate's strengths and areas of development, and
- Linking performance to compensation.

Furthermore, the manual provides that OPRAS is a mechanism that informs Government employees of the following: -

- What is expected of them (Performance goals setting)
- How the employees are doing (Performance evaluation)
- What should be done to improve employees' performance (Employee development plans)

The process governing the OPRAS is annual, and consists of three (3) main steps: -

✚ **Performance Agreement:** supervisors and subordinates agree on what the subordinate will do, what his or her objectives are, how performance will be assessed, and what resources will be available.

✚ **Mid-Year Review** of progress. During this stage, the initial agreement is reviewed and where necessary, revised.

✚ **End Year Appraisal**, which assesses the subordinate's performance⁵

Through these steps, OPRAS is expected to build a shared vision, understanding and agreement about the results to be achieved, and the approach, deployment, assessment and review of activities for continuous improvement in standards of service delivery. Its introduction is aimed to improve the quality of public services in Tanzania⁶. The procedure for processing OPRA forms is well articulated in the *Guidelines on the Use of Open Performance Review and Appraisal Form* and can be summarized as follows: -

- Employees must process the forms in triplicate
- In the event of disagreement regarding evaluation of performance, the supervisors should advise the disgruntled appraisee to report to the next higher authority.
- After the Appraisee and the Supervisor complete the form, the forms are forwarded as follows: for principal officers and above, at the end of the year, once fully completed, the original should be sent to the Permanent Secretary (Establishment), duplicates to the respective Chief Executive of an organization and triplicate to the Appraisee. All Senior officers and below, are supposed to

⁵ Medium Term Strategic Planning & Budgeting Manual pg. 61

⁶ Guidelines on the Use of OPRAS pg. 1

send the original copy, at the end of the year, once completed to the respective Chief Executive of an organization, the duplicate to the Parent Ministry respective cadre and the third to the Appraisee⁷

The OPRA form is seven (7) pages long and it is structured as outlined here below: -

- Section 1: Personal information
- Section 2: Individual performance agreement
 - Column 2.1 Serial number
 - Column 2.2 Agreed objectives
 - Column 2.3 Agreed performance targets
 - Column 2.4 Agreed performance criteria
 - Column 2.5 Agreed resources
 - Column 2.6 Appraisee's official name, signature and date of signing
 - Column 2.7 Supervisor's official name, signature and date of signing
- Section 3: Mid-Year Review
 - Column 3.1 Serial Number
 - Column 3.2 Agreed Objectives
 - Column 3.3 Progress Towards Target(s)
 - Column 3.4 Factors Affecting Performance
- Section 4: Revised Objectives
- Section 5: Annual Performance Review and Appraisal
 - Column 5.1 Serial Number
 - Column 5.2 Agreed Objective(s)
 - Column 5.3 Progress Made
 - Column 5.4 Rated Mark
- Section 6: Attributes of good performance
- Section 7: The Overall Performance
- Section 8: The reward/Employee Development Measures/Sanctions

The OPRA form is available in both English and Kiswahili languages.

As a performance management system, OPRAS is a Government initiated system that is meant to promote and encourage modern performance management in the public sector, including the public health sector. It is a system that goes around the standard steps on which many other successful and effective performance management systems are built. These include: -

1. Planning of performance
2. Implementation
3. Monitoring
4. Evaluation, and
5. Feedback

⁷ Guidelines on the Use of OPRAS pg. 3

5. Policies, systems, guidelines and processes applied to manage and measure performance in the public health sector

According to the Public Service Management and Employment Policy, every organization within the Public Service is required to operate a performance appraisal system for all its employees. The policy recognizes that the performance appraisal systems may vary from organization to organization, and from level to level. In view of this, the policy set the following elements that each of such systems must have: -

- Performance agreement, which must be drawn in consultation with an employee. The agreement must discuss and record personal and skills development objectives as well as operational objectives.
- A mechanism to give feedback to employees at an interval of not less than six months against the performance objectives, and advice and support to improve shortcomings.
- An opportunity for the employees to receive written performance assessment at the end of the performance period, the contents of which must be discussed between the employees and reporting officers during an assessment interview. The assessment interview is set to provide the opportunity to discuss the employee's training and career development needs, as well as to recognize good performance and to examine reasons and agree on remedial actions where performance has not matched the required standards.

Section 22 (1) of the Public Service Act No. 8 of 2002 specifies that every organization within the Public Service should operate OPRAS for all its public employees. The purpose of the system is to discover, evaluate and comment the potential and shortcomings of individuals to enable measures to be taken for improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Service as a continuous objective. Furthermore, the Guidelines on the Use of the Open Performance Review and Appraisal Form TFN. 832 issued by the President's Office – Public Service Management in August 2004 provide that all public offices are supposed to use the OPRA form for assessing individual employees. The Act, which was amended in 2007, emphasizes the fact that every public employer must use the OPRAS for managing and evaluating individual performance.

The OPRA process is designed to enable individual employees and their supervisors to enter into a performance agreement; to review the employee's performance progress in mid-year, in terms of progress in meeting the annual performance targets and to identify resources needed to achieve the targets for the remaining period of the year. Prior to June 30th of each year, the OPRA process requires performance of all individual civil servants to be reviewed and assessed to establish the extent to which an individual employee was able to meet the agreed performance targets. There are various mini-processes involved at this stage but the most important element is the final outcome

that the process produces. The final assessment of an individual public servant is derived from the average of sections five (5) and six (6) of the OPRA form. Having worked out the figure, it is written in a box provided in the form and becomes the official rating of the employee's performance in a given performance year. At the end of the performance year, when the performance is rated, an individual civil servant performance can be scored or rated as follows: -

1 – Outstanding: Clearly exceeds expectations, contributes more than required.

2 - Above average: Completes all the assigned objectives.

3 - Average: Meets basis requirements

4 -Poor: Fails to meet basis requirements.

5 – Very poor: Clearly falls below the requirements.

Legally speaking, therefore, the only system that the public health sector can use to manage and measure performance is OPRAS.

Whereas the aim of OPRAS, its associated policy, guidelines and process are well articulated and seemingly easier to apply, the system architecture could have improved if there was a requirement to support each rating given by evidence. Such practices have been successfully used in a number of organizations. Supervisors are required to support each rate given by concrete evidence. The approach tends to minimize subjectivity and favoritism and enhance accountability.

6. Recommendations on suitable and affordable interventions to address weaknesses, including but not limited to complexities of the OPRAS forms, training methodologies and take advantage of opportunities

Whereas by structure, this term of reference has already implied that OPRAS is weak and its associated form is complex, the study tasked itself to establish whether indeed the observations are valid.

In doing so, the study looked at the introduction of OPRAS in the public health sector as an extension of new public management, which places great emphasis on accountability for results. To the public health sector, as well as the public sector in general, the whole notion of accountability means a new dawn, a total different way of doing things compared to the past when management was not results -driven.

Successful implementation of HR reforms requires commitment and high level of understanding of the HR agenda by senior policy makers. Failure to look at the reform

process from a perspective that entails recruitment and selection of employees, employee development strategies, intra-organizational communication, employee involvement in policy formulation process etc is another element that contributes to unsuccessful implementation of the reform agenda. In summary, in order for reforms to be introduced and implemented successfully, in addition to what has been outlined above, it is ideal that the following steps are to be undertaken: -

1. Internal and external environments assessed to determine their fit and readiness to embrace the reforms.
2. The motivation issue thoroughly looked at. Other than cash rewards, policy makers can consider factoring non-cash rewards as incentives in appreciation of good performance.
3. An assessment of inter-organizational HR capability. This should determine competence and commitment levels of the HR function to drive the HR reform agenda. Policy-makers should therefore encourage auditing of the HR function to determine its capability to play key role in the reform process
4. A clear definition of the most appropriate measures of effectiveness of the HR reforms
5. A clear definition of performance expectations
6. An assessment of suitability of work conditions to the reform programs
7. A critical analysis of the career structure, to make it link up with performance
8. Mechanisms to make sure reforms are in place – i.e. what happens if somebody chooses to ignore fulfilling the requirements of the reform process?

Having said that, this study is of the view that it would be only fair to judge the strengths and weaknesses of OPRAS and its associated form based on standard structure of performance management systems. To achieve this, an analysis, which was guided by the performance management cycle, was carried out.

Figure 2.1: The Performance Management Cycle.



Source: www.microsoft.com

1. **OPRAS and planning process:** The Medium Terms Strategic Planning & Budgeting Manual describes OPRAS as a process in which supervisors and subordinates agree on what the subordinate will do, what his or her objectives are, how performance will be assessed, and what resources will be available. Performance agreements should be signed during July⁸
2. **OPRAS and execution of plans:** The process is inbuilt with a provision of resources with which to execute the agreed performance goals. Column 3.3 of the OPRA form provides an opportunity for stating progress reached towards achieving targets.
3. **OPRAS and the monitoring function:** The system monitors performance through daily and frequent communication between the supervisor and supervisee and mid-year performance reviews.
4. **OPRAS and the analysis concept:** The system demands for analysis of performance during the consideration of attributes of good performance and overall performance.

⁸ Medium Term Strategic Planning & Budgeting Manual pg. 61

5. **OPRAS and linkage of strategic goals to individual goals:** The manual defines OPRAS as an extension of the strategic plan, action plan and budget to the individual level, meaning it links strategic goals to individual goals.
6. **OPRAS and SMART goals:** Page 1 directs that each performance should be specific, measurable, achievable and relevant and time framed⁹
7. **OPRAS: Is it participatory and open?** By its structure, the process is built on participation and openness.
8. **OPRAS and recognition and rewarding of good performance:** OPRAS empowers supervisors to recommend/suggest the most appropriate reward, developmental measures or sanctions to be taken on the employee in accordance to the level of agreed performance targets. All these should be in line with the requirement of regulation 22 of the Public Service Regulations 2003¹⁰
9. **OPRAS and feedback:** The system demands for employees to receive feedback regarding their performance.
10. **The OPRA form:** Many performance evaluation forms are just as long as OPRA form (see annex 2).

Based on this analysis, it is clear that OPRAS has all the potentials to: -

- a. Change dysfunctional work behavior
- b. Communicate to employees managerial perceptions of the quality and quantity of their work
- c. Assess the future potential of employees
- d. Recommend appropriate training or development.

In consideration of the above, OPRAS and its associated forms are not significantly weak. Although there is still a room to improve the associated form (section 13 presents recommendations on how and where the form should change), the system can still be used so as to meet the intended objectives. This study identified some Government departments and agents such as the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA), the Office of National Authorizing Officer (ONAO), the Commission of Human Rights and Good Governance and Temeke District Council that use the system effectively.

The OPRA form was compared to performance evaluation forms used in a sample of international organizations (United Nations Development Programme, African Union Commission, International Labor Organization, African Development Bank), a consultancy firm (Ernst & Young) academic institutions (Ohio State University and University of Minnesota) and a number of parastatal organizations in and outside Tanzania such as the Bank of Tanzania and the National Audit Office - Malawi. Based on this comparison, this study concluded that by and large, the OPRA form requests for the same type and level of information like other forms used in other national and international organizations. On average, the OPRA form (i.e. 7 pages long) is as long as many of these other forms. In view of this, the study took a stand that the OPRA form is

⁹ Guidelines on the Use of OPRAS TFN. 832, pg. 1

¹⁰ Guidelines on the Use of OPRAS TFN. 832, pg. 3

simple to process and understand. In section 13, this report presents issues that may contribute to perceiving the form as long and complicated to process.

To determine the average time that it takes to fill the form, the study used nine (9) individuals with different levels of education, and who were not familiar with OPRAS to role-play filling the associated form and established the following durations in filling each section of the instrument (i.e. the form): -

Table 1

Section	Average time to fill the information required (in minutes)	When in a year is the filling required
1	20	Beginning
2	60	Beginning
3	60	Middle
4	60	Middle
5	60	End
6	30	End
7	15	End
8	15	End
Total	320	

On average therefore, it takes a maximum of **5 hours and 20 minutes** in a year for an employee and supervisor to process the form.

It requires one hour and twenty minutes at the beginning of the year to process and fill sections 1 and 2; 2 hours in the middle of the year to process and fill sections 3 and 4; and 2 hours at the end of the year to process and fill sections 5, 6, 7 and 8. These are times required by people who are not familiar with the system. With preparations (i.e. when both parties know what exactly they are required to do), the time can be scaled down to 4 hours.

Against this background, one cannot reasonably argue that the form is complex and takes long to fill. In fact, such an argument, even if made, would suggest that somebody who was arguing so tried to fill the form within a day, which is not in sync with the instructions on how to process the form.

Through interviewing different stakeholders, the study learned that the methodology that has been preferred to train public employees in using OPRAS and the associated form is the traditional classroom type. In this approach, trainers give instructions regarding operationalization of the system in a classroom set-up where the trainees listen and ask questions when necessary. As this study will show in the next sections, this option may not necessarily be the most effective. In the course of making this argument, other options are suggested.

OPRAS has so many opportunities for it to be effective and contributing to the process of improving performance in the public health sector. The opportunities include, but not limited to the facts that: -

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- It is the only Government preferred system for performance management across the public service sector
- There is already a directive for the public sector to apply and use it
- It is linked to the Government planning process
- It has already been introduced in the Public Service, meaning the platform to promote it already exists
- It is an open system

Section 13 of this report presents recommendations on what needs to be done if OPRAS is to make a difference in terms of improving the performance of the Public Health Sector.

7. OPRAS' relevance and suitability to attract, retain, develop and motivate Public Health Employees

Unlike the previous performance management system used in the public health sector, whose focus was on 'verification of whether employees were doing their jobs properly', OPRAS is meant to ensure that employees get the necessary help to do their jobs well. Whereas the former system favored control and measurement, OPRAS emphasizes positive supervision and staff development.

However, in HR practice, one of the acceptable arguments is that performance management systems alone cannot attract, retain, develop and motivate employees and that to attract employees, organizations need to take a holistic approach that involves the following: -

1. Having a clear mission and vision
2. Development of clear job descriptions
3. Selection candidates competitively
4. Deployment of employees in accordance with their competencies and abilities
5. Assigning employees challenging assignments
6. Compensate reasonably

In order to retain employees, it is recommended that organizations should undertake the following: -

1. Create conducive work environment
2. Develop a positive culture (i.e. inter- organizational communication, team building etc)
3. Have visionary management team and leadership
4. Empower employees

Employee development should be done through the following activities: -

1. Develop and implement effective Performance Management Systems
2. Create advancement opportunities
3. Train, and
4. Afford employees opportunities to learn

The correct activities for motivating employees should include: -

1. Simple actions (i.e. a letter, a notice board announcement etc) to recognize an employee who performs well
2. Give non-cash and cash incentives
3. Give cash rewards (i.e. salary increases)

In order for OPRAS to contribute to employee attraction, retention, development and motivation in the public health sector, the system must be supported by the way the sector: -

- Identifies and selects employees.
- Develops clear and updated job descriptions
- Designs its mission and vision
- Assigns work to employees
- Compensates
- Creates and manages opportunities for employees advancement

- Trains and assist employees to learn
- Creates environment that is supportive and helpful to work in
- Develops and implements a positive culture
- Is led by the leaders and managers who are competent and informed of the business environment
- Empowers employee
- Recognizes good performance
- Capacity by HR practitioners to effectively undertake and coordinate the HR function

Performance management systems, when applied rationally, free of favoritism and objectively, can play a key role in attracting, retaining, developing and motivating employees. But to achieve this, the system must be able to clearly link individual employee performance to organization's strategic objectives. Employees must receive the support they require from their managers, as well as resources for carrying out their performance goals. Employers must value and reward performance and equip employees with skills and knowledge that are required to improve performance. Furthermore, employers and employees must regard the performance management process as a continuous process, not just a year-end event. For this reason, performance feedback must be a constant and continuous event.

8. Having OPRAS making a difference in the Public Health Sector: What should be done?

The Public Health Sector must be clear to its employees why using OPRAS is necessary. This step will diffuse the current thinking that OPRAS is imposed from above. By promoting OPRAS as a way of improving the quality of services it offers and bettering employees' well-being, the sector will own the system, and therefore make it easy for the employees to buy it in.

We present here below a five (5) steps model that we recommend the sector to adopt in the process of turning OPRAS around and use it as a systematic tool that contributes to improvement of its performance and motivating employees. Behind this model is the argument that Performance Management Systems on their own cannot significantly improve or change performance. The concept of performance improvement needs to be looked at from a wider perspective. The model's key steps are: -

1. Approaching the HR cycle as an integrated phenomenon
2. Introducing and enhancing Performance Culture
3. Adopting a different approach to training in OPRAS
4. Simplify the OPRA form to make it more focused

5. Linking OPRAS to Individual Employee Productivity

Step 1: Approaching the HR cycle as an integrated phenomenon

The Public Health Sector should practice and acknowledge the fact that good performance by employees starts from perfectly fitting employees into their jobs, and developing them once they are in the jobs. The acknowledgement must be accompanied by the following specific activities: -

1. Activity 1: Reviewing and constantly updating job descriptions

Justification: One of the common mistakes that many employers commit without exactly knowing its implication on employees' performance is not reviewing and updating job descriptions when roles and challenges of the organizations change. Job descriptions are the road maps that employees follow in linking their work outputs to the organizational strategic plans. When the Public Health Sector, for example, is faced with a new challenge like a breakout of a certain pandemic, addressing the problem may require changing employees' roles, and hence, job descriptions.

Failure to review and update job descriptions always result to employees failing to link their performance targets to organizational goals because their job descriptions say one thing, while they actually do different things. The sector needs to regard job descriptions as a foundation for performance reviews, setting goals and growth paths. A well-written job description is the foundation for developing interview questions and therefore, identification of the right candidate. In addition, job descriptions help to identify and establish reporting lines. We therefore recommend that: -

- a. The sector undertake job evaluations, and subsequently review and update job descriptions
- b. The job evaluation exercise should result to generic job descriptions, leaving room for the public health workers to fill in specific tasks that they performs, depending on their locations and prevailing challenges.

2. Activity 2: Selecting candidates competitively

Justification: Individual employee's performance at work is hugely influenced by the employee's attitude, competence, skills and knowledge about work and the organization the individual works for. This ties a lot of importance to the selection during recruitment process. The perfect job-person match makes performance easy. We therefore recommend that: -

- a. The sector develops a Recruitment Strategy that ensures the selection process identifies candidate who have the right attitude, competences, skills and knowledge. It is important that the recruitment strategy is built on outcomes of the job evaluation exercise
- b. The strategy should be applied uniformly across the sector

3. Activity 3: Orienting newly recruited employees

Justification: Acquainting newly recruited employees to the challenges, successes and opportunities of the sector helps to make themselves see how they can fit in the big picture. The sector needs to develop an orientation strategy that helps to take the new employees on board, and motivate them to use their ideas, energies and knowledge to achieve the mission and vision of the sector. We therefore recommend that: -

- a. The sector develops a structured orientation programme
- b. The sector uses the occasion to 'win' the newly recruited employees so that they confirm that joining the sector was the right thing to do
- c. The developed programme should capitalize on success stories, opportunities and weaknesses and challenge the newly recruited employees to contribute ideas how they can play a critical role in moving things forward

4. Activity 4: Deploying newly recruited employees to positions they applied for/they are competent in

Justification: Deployment of the newly recruited employees should be looked at in the context of the Recruitment Strategy. Job interviews should be used to identify potential candidates. There is a need for the sector to link the interviews (i.e. identification of potential candidates) to succession plan, and therefore mentoring and coaching. We therefore recommend that: -

- a. Deployment of employees should be an extension of the identification of potential during the interview process
- b. Similarly, deployment should consider future needs of the sector and therefore be linked to coaching and mentoring, and the succession plan

5. Activity 5: Using probation period seriously

Justification: Employers who do not use the probation period to detect potential performance problems have themselves to blame. The sector needs to avoid making this common mistake. Probation periods must be taken seriously to ensure that non-performers do not stay in the sector. We recommend the following: -

- a. Supervisors must be trained to detect performance flaws
- b. Supervisors must be empowered to address performance flaws, including reporting them
- c. Remedial actions (i.e. extending probation period) must be instituted when necessary
- d. Non-performers must be separated from the sector, when remedial actions fail

6. Activity 6: Coaching and mentoring

Justification: One of the reasons why the sector needs to use coaching and mentoring has been presented under activity 4 above. Coaching and mentoring can help newly recruited employees through: -

- a. Obtaining work related guidance/direction from mentors/coach

- b. Having a reliable person to consult and seek counseling from
- c. Learning the history of the sector and how things are done (i.e. work culture)

In addition, the mentors can be motivated by the practice by: -

- a. Feeling that they are being appreciated and trusted to mentor someone
- b. Having an opportunity to transfer knowledge
- c. Networking with new entrants

7. Activity 7: Improving supervisory skills

Justification: The impact of poor supervisory skills on performance is another area that is commonly being overlooked by many employers. A supervisor can make or break an employee. Whereas the question of performance is of paramount importance at any work place, the Public Health Sector must appreciate that supervisors play a critical part in influencing how people work. In view of this, we recommend that the sector equips supervisors with the needed skills. Modern management uses simplified approaches such as issuing a 'Guide on How to Supervise' to minimize cost

8. Activity 8: Encourage Learning and Training

Justification: The correlation between acquisition of knowledge, ideas and skills on one hand, and performance need not be underlined. The sector needs to invest in learning and training of employees.

9. Activity 9: Encourage and enhance working in teams

Justification: Working in teams is recommended in the same context as above, - as a platform for learning from one another and building capacities.

10. Activity 10: Communicating

Justification: When people know why they are doing what they are doing, chances for their motivational levels to pick up increases. Performance issues affecting the sector need to be communicated (i.e. how are we doing on target X?)

11. Activity 11: Empowering employees

Justification: Employees who are empowered tend to be more motivated. The sector needs to consider increased delegation of powers, if this is not yet done.

Whereas steps 1 to 5 can only be applied to employees who are joining the sector, employees who are already working in the sector can benefit from the implementation of steps 6 to 11.

Step 2: Introducing and enhancing Performance Culture

Creating a performance culture requires a systematic approach to managing the performance of organizations, teams and individuals. Culture is the learned assumptions on which people base their daily behavior. It is the 'operating system' of the company, the organizational DNA¹¹. We recommend the following building blocks for introducing and enhancing the performance culture in the public health sector. However, before listing and discussing the blocks, we wish to comment that the introduction and enhancement of the performance culture can benefit from the sector's adoption of its own mission and vision. By having such an identity, institutions bring together their employees: -

Block 1: Working with training institutions to include OPRAS/the Government Performance Cycle in curriculums

The sector may need to consider working with high and ordinary level institutions that train public health workers to have the concept of OPRAS integrated into the training curriculums. Unlike students pursuing management courses (i.e. Human Resources, Business studies etc), students doing public health courses may not have the benefit of learning about performance at work, and how the Government plans, implements, monitors and evaluates performance.

Such students, when they start working after graduation may be hearing OPRAS for the first time. This, and the fact that strategies to introduce OPRAS may not be well structured, can have the performance concept starting from a negative perspective. Through the integration of performance planning process, including OPRAS in the curriculums, the idea may be built well in advance before the students start using the system.

Block 2: Letters of employment offer (i.e. how to get promotion)

It would add value if letters of appointment for all public health employees had a section that articulates: -

- The performance management system (i.e. OPRAS) – how the sector manages and measures performance of individual employees
- That promotions are given on the basis of (among other factors) performance
- Why it is important to fill and process an OPRA form
- How OPRAS is linked to the Government performance planning process

Block 3: Orientation

Newly recruited employees should be oriented in different areas, including OPRAS. The sector needs to allocate enough time to orient in OPRAS during the sessions. The sessions should include role-playing of the whole process in an attempt to transfer 'complete' knowledge. What we recommend here is to give presentations on OPRAS enough time during orientation programmes.

¹¹ Joanne Reid and Victoria Hubbell, Creating a Performance Culture, Ivey Business Journal, March/April 2005

Block 4: Improving infrastructure

The sector needs to ensure that the efforts outlined above are followed by implementation of a strategy that guarantees constant availability of OPRA forms, information on how the process works (i.e. brochures, booklets, guidelines etc.). The idea here is to ensure that implementation of the system is supported by a well laid out mechanism.

Block 5: Recognize and reward performance

The sector must develop strategies to recognize and reward performance. This should not be limited to monetary rewards. Announcing an employee of the month, writing a letter of recognition, buying an employee who has achieved extraordinary results etc. could serve the purpose. In addition, supervisors must be trained to recognize and acknowledge performance (i.e. a simple word as congratulations can make a huge difference)

The fact that pillar 2 of reforms in the public sector is going to focus on introducing performance culture gives the sector an opportunity to borrow ideas on how such a culture can be introduced.

Step 3: Adopting a different approach to training in OPRAS

This study recognizes shortage of funds and competencies as major challenges in training public sector employees in using OPRAS, especially through the traditional classroom approach. In view of this, the study proposes the following approaches, which are considered more effective in terms of cost and reaching many people at a go.

Activity 1: Identify and train selected sector employees to become OPRAS champions in each Local Authority: Currently, the training process in OPRAS is more or less centralized in PO-PSM and the Civil Service Institute. Given the country's geographical spread, this fact makes operationalization of training difficult. It is recommended that the sector identify its own employees, who are competent enough to train other in OPRAS and drive the process. Each council should have one (1) such a person to train public health employees. The scope of the involvement of the trainer should extend to making sure that all public health employees in the council/local government authority fill OPRA forms as required.

Activity 2: Developing Do-It-yourself (DIY) guides: These are simple printed materials that will guide employees on how to fill the OPRA form. They inform the employees what they are supposed to do step-by-step. Once printed, they should be made available in all health facilities. They do not have to be very expensive or printed by an up-street facility.

Activity 3: Recording Videos/DVDs: The sector may take advantage of the fact visual technology is fast-spreading in the country by doing about 10 minute visual instructions through videos or DVDs on how to process the form. These, like the DIY guides above must be made in a way that they, on their own, can inform employees what they are supposed to do.

Activity 4: Recording Tapes/CDs: The same like above

Step 4: Simplify the OPRA form to make it more focused

The recommendations to simplify the OPRA form do not necessarily mean that this study agrees that the form is long and complicated. Rather, the recommendations are made in the context of simplifying the form to: -

1. Avoid having the form requesting for information that is already available somewhere else and within the same planning process
2. Make it user-friendly and straight to the point
3. Have it seek for evidence to support the final rating given

The suggestion that there is a need to design different OPRA forms for different cadres of public employees and various levels of employment was thoroughly considered as well. The study disagrees that this is important, or even required. In doing so, the study attributes lack of clarity in how to process the form and how can each public employee relate to the process to information overload. At the end of discussing step 4, we present suggestions on how this can be resolved. As we will show, it is important that the public health sector considers forming committees to oversee and coordinate performance process. Step 5 discusses this issue at extensively.

Here below are our suggestions on simplification of the form.

Section	Suggestions	Why?
1	Remove the requests to provide vote code, sub-vote, academic qualifications, salary scale and date of birth	The requests may be contributing to having the form perceived complicated. Besides, the information is basically payroll related (and can therefore be obtained from the payroll). A low level employee may find responding to these requests a little stressing.
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limit agreed performance objectives to between 3 and 4. 2. Remove the column for agreed performance targets 3. Remove the column for agreed resources 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It should be considered that the OPRA forms are extensions of strategic plans, which themselves already have objectives (i.e. contributing to the Government's national development agenda). There is no much value added therefore from requesting employees to identify 6 objectives while in principle, each employee's objectives should be

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		<p>contributing to the annual plan and therefore the strategic plan</p> <p>2. The underlying assumption is, each employee contributes for the achievement of the annual plan, - which should be every employee's performance target.</p> <p>3. Allocation of resources is done through MTEF</p>
3	Re-structure along the suggestions given above	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-structure along the suggestion given on row 2 • Limit agreed revised objectives to 2. 	Employees should not be encouraged to have a total shift of performance objectives after 6 months into a performance year. In addition, if the annual plan does not change, why should an employee have a total shift of objectives?
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop column 5.3 	If there is a definition of rating, and the final rating is an average of the employee's self-appraisal and the supervisor's, there is a little value for requesting the employee to comment on 'progress made'. This will be the same information the employee would have for the 'rated mark'. Follow the structure on section 6
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments by supervisor should come first before comments by observer • Comments by supervisor should be expanded to include evidence for supporting the rating given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The observer is coming as overseer, and should therefore give comments after the supervisor • Supervisors must be held accountable for the final rating given (accountability here means requested to support the rating with evidence)

Step 5: Linking OPRAS to Individual Employee Productivity

Objective of any Performance Management System is to increase and sustain productivity. The processes that have been discussed in steps 1, 2, 3 and 4 are just means to an end. They can be well implemented but still not add value to productivity if systematic methodologies are not instituted.

In addition, the biggest challenge that the Public Sector has, as far as performance management is concerned, is failure to appreciate OPRAS as part and parcel of the performance cycle. Somehow, other key components of the cycle such as strategic plans, MTEF, annual plans and annual performance reports are implemented differently from OPRAS. In view of this, the study recommends implementation of the following activities to ensure that a well implemented OPRAS makes positive contribution to the sector productivity'

Activity: Form a committee in each council to undertake the following mandates

- To give inputs, from the public health perspectives, to the situational analysis (are the public health sector priorities well captured?)
- To review and give suggestions for improving the public health concerns in the strategic plans
- To assist councils' public health leadership to communicate to the (public health sector) employees the performance goals of the sector as expressed in the strategic plans and annual plans
- To assist the council's leadership to develop individual performance goals (i.e. goals for the leaders)
- To assist public health departments to develop annual work plans
- To remind management and employees of the public health sector about mid-year and end of the year performance discussion sessions
- To review evaluated OPRA forms

Justification: The right diagnosis of the problems facing the Public Health Sector is the starting point for the sector's positive contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the national agenda. In addition, when the diagnosis is done right, it can motivate employees. If the sector identified problem X during the situational analysis as an important input to the strategic plan, and employees find themselves working on the problem, they can easily see the connection between their performances and the strategic plan. However, if the strategic plan says one thing and employees do another thing, the connection can be quickly lost. Situational analysis plays a critical role in this process, as it determines which inputs go to the planning, and thereafter, implementation processes. The committee will play a watchdog/whistle blowing role by ensuring that the interests of the public health sector in a given geographical area have been adequately researched and considered before they are put into the strategic plan. Moreover, either through the District Medical Officers or/and District Health Secretaries,

the Committee should ensure that the outcomes of the analysis are presented and discussed in the meetings to prepare strategic plans.

Employees in the Public Health Sector can benefit from having the Committee do the following: -

- Extract the sectorial performance goals/key issues from strategic plans and communicate them in more simple ways. One of the problems that may contribute to linking individual performance to institutional strategic objectives is the inability of many employees to see trees (i.e. how do they fit in) in a forest (i.e. strategic plan). Take an example of a target like **'Improving health care offered by health centers'**. The communication can help to break the target down to show the roles expected to be played by pharmacists, laboratory technicians, security guards, nurses etc in achieving it.
- Due to the cascading nature of the performance objectives in OPRAS, the Committee can also assist the leadership of the Health Sector in district councils to set their performance goals. Once this is done, the leadership should share the goals with their subordinates so that there is consistency across the sector.
- The committee should also assist departments to develop work plans for the same reasons as above (i.e. consistency and ensuring that the plans capture the objectives of strategic plans)
- The Committee should also issue reminders to employees to undertake mid-year reviews and end –of-the- year performance evaluation, so that the events are not missed out
- One of the problems with the current procedural structure of OPRAS is, the process does not demand evidence to support whichever performance rating given. The shortcoming of this is that supervisors can be subjective. To address this, we recommend two (2) actions: -
 - The OPRA form should be re-designed to have a section for supervisors to justify the ratings they give
 - The committee should review performance forms before they (the forms) are distributed for filing. The United Nations system has successfully used this approach. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for example, has what is called Career Review Group (CRG), which is a committee that reviews all performance evaluation forms. Each supervisor has to appear before the group to defend/explain the rating given to subordinates. The approach has assisted to ensure that individual performance goals are correctly linked to strategic mission, and that fairness is observed. It also gives a degree of credibility to the exercise. What should happen therefore is 1) the committee reviews all forms filled by public health employees 2) the objective is to ensure that they are all well processed 3) that there is justification for all ratings given. It is recommended for all supervisors to appear before the committee to 'defend' the ratings they awarded.

During this study, we established that the sector already has what are known as Council Health Management Teams (CHMTs). Unfortunately, we also observed that currently, the teams are not as strong, in terms of capacity, as they are supposed to be. We recommend that rather than forming new structures to undertake the roles of the committee outlined above, the sector should enable the teams with the necessary skills to undertake the original duties they were designed to undertake, plus the roles of the committees.

9. Practical and cost effective operational systems and procedures that can be used to train, monitor and evaluate the OPRAS; Operational systems and procedures for OPRAS application in the Public Health Sector

Before embarking on identifying operational systems and procedures to train, monitor and evaluate effectiveness of OPRAS, the public health sector must first consider to promote and popularize the system among the public health employees. Training becomes easier when the targeted trainees think there is a need for them to acquire the knowledge that the training will impart. By doing this, the sector will have created expectations and conducive environment for the training to succeed.

Section 13 has presented different approaches that the sector can use for training.

Monitoring and evaluation of OPRAS, its operational systems and procedures should target at assessing whether the system is comprehensively linked to strategic plans, MTEF and annual plans. Currently, the view of this study is, this is where the weakness is. The committee which we proposed for constitution in section 13 should achieve this by doing the activities under the recommended terms of reference.

It is also recommended that the sector should have a focal person who coordinates and follow up the application of OPRAS by public health facilities in different councils. The focal person should be able to network with committees in all councils to identify and help to address shortcomings in the way the system is applied. Additionally, the person should have the number of public health sector employees in each council and ensure that they all fill OPRA form. This can be done through working with District Human Resources Officer, District Medical Officers and District Health Secretaries.

10. Practical approaches for promoting OPRAS as an effective HR tool

In the opinion of this study, the best practical way for promoting OPRAS as an effective HR tool is by demonstrating to the sector's employees that performance matters. OPRAS can start being taken seriously if there is commitment and willingness by management to use it as a tool that distinguishes good performance from bad performance. Only when positive outcomes from OPRAS start to earn good performers recognition and rewards, the system will have been promoted as an effective HR tool.

In this regard, the study proposes the following steps: -

Step 1: Promote OPRAS, i.e. through letters of offer of employment, orientation, college curriculums etc.

Step 2: Make accessing OPRAS materials easy, i.e. visual and audio aid, DIY guides etc

Step 3: Have committees in each council to follow up on performance

Step 4: Monitor and evaluate the application/implementation of OPRAS

Step 5: Take a holistic view on the HR process in the sector, i.e. have a common recruitment strategy, improve work conditions, provide employees with modern work tools.

Step 6: Talk OPRAS, do OPRAS

11. OPRAS and other HR tools working together to increase the Public Health Sector productivity

The importance of linking the public sector's productivity with other HR processes, in addition to performance evaluation, can not be over-emphasized. Section 13 of this report presents the study's recommendations on other HR tools that should combine with OPRAS in order to increase the sector's productivity. These are: -

- a. Undertaking job evaluation with the aim of updating/improving job descriptions
- b. Select recruits competitively
- c. Orient new recruits, and use the orientation event to discuss OPRAS
- d. Deploy new recruits to the jobs they were recruited for or in positions that they demonstrated potential to grow
- e. Coaching and mentoring
- f. Improve supervisory skills
- g. Learning and training
- h. Working in teams
- i. Encourage and enhance communication
- j. Empower employees
- k. Integrate OPRAS and the Government performance cycle in curriculums of training institutions
- l. Use letters of appointment to present OPRAS as a tool that manages and monitors performance, and that promotion in the sector is subject to good performance

- m. Develop infrastructure
- n. Recognize and reward performance
- o. Simply training in OPRAS
- p. Form committees to oversee the performance process

12. OPRAS and the re-introduction of Pay-for-Performance strategy

Pay-for-performance is defined as a motivation concept in which employees receive increased compensation for reaching certain targets¹². The concept is built on the assumption that different people performing the same job have different value to the organization¹³, and as such, they have to be paid differently, depending on their levels of performance.

Employee performance depends on three general factors (Employee performance = $f(S,K,M)$ where S = Skill and ability to perform task, K = Knowledge of facts, rules, principles, and procedures, M = Motivation to perform¹⁴. Pay-for-performance strategy requires accurate measuring of performance. In order to reward performance, you have to know how to measure it, and the measurement system must be designed to work in a way that is efficient, effective, fair and transparent. Furthermore, in order to allow performance to be the pay level determinant, the employer must ensure employees have the required skills, knowledge and motivation.

In a nutshell, effective operationalization of the pay-for-performance strategy requires that: -

1. There is a good understanding of the applicable performance management system by supervisors as well as employees i.e. what it is, how does it work?
2. There is a visible linkage of strategic objectives to individual performance goals through clearly stipulated instruments (cascading through different levels of performance such as annual plan, departmental work plans etc)
3. Employees are empowered
4. Job descriptions are updated
5. Employees are given feedback on their performance continuously
6. Supervisors are equipped with performance counseling skills
7. There is a clear policy on how the strategy works and how it is going to be implemented
8. The strategy discusses what the sector plans to do with employees who fail to perform as expected.

Most of the conditions listed above do not exist in the current public health set-up. In view of this, this study is of the opinion that pay-for-performance's re-introduction is slightly premature. Before considering re-introducing the process, the sector needs to ensure that OPRAS is significantly understood within the sector; OPRAS is perfectly integrated (in practice) in the Government performance cycle; all jobs in the sector have

¹² Wikipedia – February 1, 2010

¹³ Milkovich and Newman, Compensation (6th Edition, 1999) – pg. 271

¹⁴ McCloy, J, Campbell J, and Cudeck, R 'Confirmatory Test of a Model of Performance Determinants, Journal of Applied Psychology 79 (4) (1994) pg 493 - 505

been evaluated and have updated job descriptions; the infrastructure is improved; there are SMART criteria to measure performance; resources to pay for good performance are available and there is a clear policy on how manage poor performance.

13. Roles of different stakeholders in implementing recommendations of the study

The matrix below shows the recommendations of the study and the roles of different stakeholders in their implementation.

Recommendation	Stakeholders and suggested roles
Approaching the HR cycle as an integrated phenomenon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Health Sector and public health employees: Embrace and own the recommendation; develop a plan of action for implementation, communicate the planned change and their benefits, prepare to manage the change process, monitor and evaluate progress, participate actively to carry out the proposed changes, monitor and evaluate progress of the process 2. MoHSW: Empower the sector to introduce change, provide financial support, provide guidance and policy support, communicate about the change process to other ministries for a support/wider buy-in and for them to challenge the process, a step that can help to get feedback and comments for improving the change process 3. PO-PSM: Support the sector in the process of introducing changes through policy and logistical assistance, afford opportunities to learn and train 4. PMO-RALG: Support the sector to introduce change through policy and logistical assistance, create supportive infrastructure, 5. Development partners: Financial and logistic support (i.e. monitoring and evaluation of the change process)
Introducing and enhancing performance culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MoHSW: Coordinate and lead the culture transformation process; change curriculum in training institutes under the ministry to include teaching of the performance concept 2. Ministry of Education and Vocational Trainings: Change curriculum in higher learning institutes to include teaching of the performance concept 3. Training institutes and their teaching staff:

	<p>Embrace the change and develop practical ways to teach the students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. PO-PSM: Support the curriculum change process by providing teaching resources and materials, assist the change process from a policy context 5. Students pursuing Public Health courses: Understand the intent of the change and take the lessons seriously 6. Development partners: Financial and logistic support 7. Public Health Sector: Take leadership in the process, own the process, monitor and evaluate progress
Adopting a different approach to training in OPRAS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Health Sector: Develop affordable strategies and financial frameworks to implement the recommendations, monitor and evaluate progress 2. MoHSW: Support the sector financially and logistically to implement the change 3. PO-PSM: Support the sector to develop quality strategies for implementing the recommendations 4. PMO-RALG: Support the sector by creating supportive infrastructure 5. Development partners: Financial and logistic support
Simplifying the OPRA form to make it more focused	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PO-PSM: Allowing the sector to change the OPRA form, support the change process 2. MoHSW: Provide support to the sector; assist in promoting the revised form across the sector, 3. PO-PSM: Support the sector in the process of introducing changes, afford opportunities to learn and train 4. PMO-RALG: Support the sector to introduce change, create supportive infrastructure for the promotion of the change and distribution of the revised form 5. Development partners: Financial and logistic

	support
Linking OPRAS to individual employee productivity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Health Sector: Embrace and own the recommendation; develop a plan of action for implementation, take leadership in monitoring and evaluating the plan of action 2. MoHSW: Provision of support 3. PO-PSM: Provision of support 4. PMO-RALG: Provision of support 5. Development partners: Financial and logistic support, especially to build capacity of the Capacity of Council Health Management Teams 6. Capacity of Council Health Management Teams: Play a critical role by driving the whole process of linking individual employee productivity to OPRAS and eventually the annual plans and strategic plans

14. Summary of findings

The Public Health sector needs to undertake the following key activities in order to benefit from OPRAS by improving planning, directing, managing, monitoring and evaluating performance of the sector's employees.

1. Review and upgrade job descriptions for all job positions under the sector
2. Develop and implement a recruitment strategy that ensures the right selection of candidates
3. Develop and implement an appropriate orientation strategy
4. Deploy employees in a manner that ensures a perfect fit between their skills and requirements of the job, and future needs of the sector
5. Using probation period seriously to disengage employees who show signs of not fitting in the sector
6. Develop and implement programmes to coach and mentor new employees
7. Improve supervisory skills
8. Encourage learning and training
9. Encourage and enhance working in teams
10. Improve communication
11. Empower employees
12. Introduce and uphold performance culture
13. Adopt a different approach to OPRAS training
14. Simplify the OPRA form
15. Link OPRAS to individual employee productivity, by among other things, forming committees to drive the performance planning, managing, monitoring and evaluating processes

The study is of the opinion that OPRAS is good enough to address the question of performance and accountability in the sector. Although a few adjustments have been recommended for making the system better, the study established that primarily, it is the environment in which the system operates that needs more attention by policy formulators and other stakeholders. It is important that the sector takes a long view on the situation to appreciate that OPRAS by itself can not bring about the expected change. The spirit should be to focus on various other variables which, together with OPRAS, can work to improve and enhance performance. The recommendations listed above have considered the environment and other challenges that the system is currently experiencing.

This study appreciates that implementing these recommendations in all councils can be time consuming, ambitious and even confusing. In view of this, we recommend that the sector chooses a few councils, maybe a maximum of ten (10) in which to test-run the recommendations. The recommendations may need a few changes here and there to fit into the environment, but this knowledge can only be obtained after they are tried. Once the knowledge is obtained, and the recommendations are improved, they (the recommendations) can be widely spread to other councils.

15. Going forward: Program of Action for introducing, implementing and sustaining recommended changes

Action	Action needed
<u>Overall challenge</u> Approaching the HR cycle as an integrated phenomenon	
<u>Specific actions</u>	
1. Review and constantly upgrade job descriptions	1. Undertake a Job evaluation exercise
2. Select candidates competitively	2. Develop a recruitment strategy
3. Orient newly recruited employees	3. Develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy
4. Deploy newly recruited employees appropriately	4. This should be covered in/by the recruitment strategy
5. Using probation period seriously	5. Integrate this in the supervisory skills training and in the recruitment strategy
	6. Develop a guide on coaching and

6. Coaching and mentoring 7. Improving supervisory skills 8. Encourage learning and training 9. Strengthen communication 10. Empower employees	mentoring, train supervisors how to coach and mentor 7. Train, develop and distribute guides on how to supervise 8. Identify quick wins for enabling employees to learn and train 9. Develop a communication strategy (i.e. meetings, notice board communications, newsletters etc) 10. Delegate powers/develop a communication strategy
<u>Overall challenge</u> Introducing and enhancing Performance Culture <u>Specific actions</u> 1. Integrate the Government performance cycle into academic curriculums 2. Give a brief on OPRAS and how employees can get promoted in letters of appointment 3. Use orientation programmes to promote OPRAS and the performance concept as a whole 4. Improve infrastructure 5. Recognize and reward performance	1. Start negotiating with relevant authorities to develop an appropriate strategy 2. Change the structure of the appointment letters 3. Develop an orientation strategy that addresses this matter 4. Review the sector's infrastructure to ensure continuous availability of the form and other supporting variables 5. Train supervisors how to recognize and reward performance (non-cash rewards), develop a strategy towards this end
<u>Overall challenge</u> Adopting a different approach to training OPRAS <u>Specific actions</u> 1. Develop DIY guides 2. Record videos, DVDS, audio-	1. Design and distribute the guides 2. Design, produce and distribute the

tapes/CDs 3. Upload the instructions on how to fill the form on the website	materials 3. Simplify the instructions and upload them on the website
<u>Overall challenge</u> Simplify the OPRA form to make it more focused	1. Get the responsible ministry (PO-PSM) to green light implementation of the proposed changes 2. Change the form as recommended
<u>Overall challenge</u> Linking OPRAS to individual employee productivity <u>Specific action</u> Form a committee in each council to undertake the roles outlined in the report	Select a few councils to try-run the recommendation(s)

16. Quick – wins

To implement the recommendations made, the assessment is of the view that the sector should start with 'quick wins', which are defined as activities that may be embarked upon quickly and easily, without involving much of policy level discussions. These are identified as: -

1. Introducing orientation programs
2. Recruiting and deploying competitively
3. Using probation periods for newly recruited employees effectively
4. Training supervisors
5. Encouraging learning and training
6. Encouraging team work
7. Encouraging communication
8. Improving infrastructure
9. Recognizing and rewarding good performance
10. Designing tools to facilitate easy transfer of knowledge regarding OPRAS
11. Appointing OPRAS champions for the sector in each Local Authority

17. Conclusion

The study was commissioned to undertake a critical analysis of two (2) other studies that were done to assess the implementation of OPRAS in the public health sector. In addition, it was supposed to review the OPRAS guiding policies, systems, guidelines and processes, in particular how they are being applied in the sector.

At its conclusion, the study established that there are a number of shortcomings that need to be addressed for the OPRAS to be effective in the public health sector. In order for the system to operate and deliver as expected, it must be promoted across the sector, so that stakeholders know what it is about, how it operates and what are their roles in the whole context. This can be achieved through various steps such as simplifying the way the stakeholders are taught how to use the system. The recommendations the study made in this regard include developing and distributing to the sector's employees Do-It-Yourself guides, using visual and audio technology and uploading the instructions regarding how to use OPRAS on the website.

However, the study noted that the sector needs to look at performance management as an integrated component of the HR cycle. This will help to appreciate that success or failure of OPRAS is dependent on variables that may not necessarily be performance-based. In view of this, the study commented that it is relevant for the sector to evaluate jobs so that all job descriptions are upgraded. Achieving this will afford employees a succinct perspective regarding their responsibilities. The move to consider performance management in a holistic milieu should as well pay attention to selection of employees, orientation, deployment, using probation period seriously, coaching and mentoring, improving supervisory skills, encouraging learning and training, encouraging team work, improving communication and empowering employees.

Another dimension that the sector needs to pay attention to is introducing and enhancing performance culture. The study established that the sector could benefit from employing candidates who already have an idea what performance is, and how the sector approaches, manages, monitors and evaluates performance. At an entry level, employees must be impressed regarding the sector's outlook towards performance and what role does performance play in career development.

The study observed that the sector has a chance to consider simplifying the OPRA form by removing unnecessary requests for information. This observation considered the pedigree of the majority of stakeholders who are expected to use the form. Lastly, the study recommended that the sector should look into strategies to link OPRAS to individual productivity. Without this effort, there is a risk of improving the system on paper, without necessarily having it contributing to productivity. The study proposed to creation of committees which will be responsible to ensure that the sector's interests are well presented in the situational analyses as well as strategic plans. But the most important role for the committees should be to simplify the strategic plans and communicate the sector-specific information to the employees. The committees should also assist the sector and its employees to set performance goals/individual performance goals, coordinate the performance process (i.e. reminding employees to review performance mid and end of the year etc).

Annex 1 – List of documents which were reviewed

1. The Human Resource for Health Strategic Plan: 2008 – 2013 (January 2008)
2. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare's Health Policy (June 2007)
3. The Ministry of Health's Sector PER Update for FY 06 (September 2006)
4. A paper titled 'Provision of Health Services in Tanzania in the 21st Century: Lessons from the Past', which was presented in a workshop on 'Economic Policy Environment in Tanzania in the 21st Century: Lessons from the Nyerere Legacy' (March 2000)
5. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare's Annual Implementation Reports (Physical and Financial) for different periods
6. The Tanzanian Government Standing Orders (1994)
7. A Booklet on Public Service Reform Programme – Phase Two (2008 – 2012)
8. Rejea za Sera, Sheria, Kanuni na Nyaraka Mbalimbali Kuhusu Masuala ya Ajira Katika Utumishi wa Umma (2004)
9. Mwongozo Kuhusu Mashauri ya Nidhamu na Rufaa kwa Watumishi wa Umma (2005)
10. Mwongozo Kuhusu Masuala ya Ajira Katika Utumishi wa Umma (2005)
11. Medium Term Strategic Planning and Budgeting Manual
12. OPRA form and Guidelines on the Use of OPRAS (TFN.832) – August, 2004
13. Different literatures on Performance for Pay
14. Lessons learnt from the Human Resource for Health Programme Implemented by the Benjamin Mkapa HIV/AIDS Foundation (2009)
15. An article titled 'The match between motivation and performance management of health sector workers in Mali' by Marjolein Dieleman, Jurrien Toonen, Hamadassalia Toure and Tim Martineau, 2006
16. Public Health in Africa by Jennifer G. Cooke, 2009
17. Improving motivation among health care workers in private care organizations: A perspective of nursing personnel by Z. Vilma and K. Egle, 2007
18. HR and New Approaches to Public Sector Management: Improving HRM Capacity, by Dr. Stephen Bach, 2001
19. Public Service Management and Employment Policy
20. Decentralization for Service Delivery in Tanzania. A paper presented by the President Office – Regional Administration and Local Government at the conference on Building Capacity for the Education Sector in Africa, Oslo, Norway, October 2005
21. Staff Management and Organizational Performance in Tanzania and Uganda: Public Servant Perspectives. A paper prepared for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Danish Institute for International Studies and DEGE Consult in cooperation with the University of Dar-es-Salaam, Mentor Consult, Kampala and the University of Copenhagen, March 2007
22. Joint Assistance Strategy for Tanzania, 2006
23. Local Government, Effectiveness and Human Rights: The cases of Bukoba Rural and Mtwara –Mikindani Districts in Tanzania, a paper by Rwekaza

- Mukandala presented in the Researchers' Workshop on Local Government: Delivering Public Services held in Geneva, February 2004
24. Strengthening the management of Human Resources in the Public Sector for Improved Service Delivery, Institute of Public Administration of the Mzumbe University, February 2007
 25. Reward Practices and Performance Management System Effectiveness, Edward E. Lawler III, 2003
 26. Local Government System in Tanzania, 2006
 27. Local Governance in Tanzania: Observations from Six Councils 2002-2003 by REPOA
 28. An article titled 'Change Management: Organizational and personal change management process, plans, change management and business development tips' sourced from <http://www.businessballs.com> – January 20, 2010
 29. Performance Management and Appraisal Tips – <http://www.impactfactory.com> – January 20, 2010
 30. The Introduction of New Appraisals Systems in the Public Services of Commonwealth Caribbean – <http://www.entrepreneur.com> – January 21, 2010
 31. Introducing Performance Management in National Health Systems: Issues on Policy Implementation by Javier Martinex and Tim Martineau (2001)
 32. Compensation, by Milkovich and Newman (1999)
 33. Academy of Management Review (1994)
 34. Nation Audit Office of Malawi, Guide to Open Performance Appraisal System (undated)
 35. Performance Management in the Tanzania Public Sector (A paper presented in the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM) Conference) – Dr. Benson A. Bana, March 2009
 36. An article titled 'Creating a Performance Culture' by Joanne Reid and Victoria Hubbell, Ivey Business Journal, March/April 2005
 37. An article titled "Developing Capacity for Managing Public Service Reform: The Tanzania Experience 2000-2008" by Peter J. Morgan, Heather Baser and Denyse Morin, Public Administration Development Journal, 2010

Annex 2 – List of individuals who were interviewed

1. Mr. S. Ngatunga – Deputy Secretary, Health Service Department, Public Service Commission (January 28, 2010)
2. Ms. Miriam Mbaga – Principal Administrative Officer, Prime Minister’s Office – Regional Administration (February 10, 2010)
3. Mr. Mick Kiliba – Director, Management Service Division, President’s Office – Public Management Services (February 12, 2010)
4. Mr. Joseph Maginga, DHRO – Kilindi (February 26, 2010)
5. Mr. Phillemon Magesa, DHRO – Biharamulo (February 26, 2010)
6. Mr. Muhua Kapangawazi, DHRO – Mkuranga (February 26, 2010)
7. Mr. Emilian Rwegasira Rugainamwa, DHRO – Tandahimba (February 26, 2010)
8. Mr. Winslaus Lindi, DHRO – Kilwa (February 26, 2010)
9. Ms. T.A. Chando – DAP – Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (March 4, 2010)
10. Ms. Prisca Lwangili – HRO – Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (March 4, 2010)

Annex 3 – Interview questions

1. Is OPRAS used in your institution?
2. If yes, to which extent/degree?
3. How were employees trained in using OPRAS?
4. How OPRA forms are made accessible to employees?
5. How is performance evaluation process linked to institutional strategic planning and MTEF?
6. How are new employees introduced to OPRAS?
7. What strategy is used to sustain knowledge about OPRAS?
8. What are your views regarding structure of OPRA form?
9. Are there areas that should be addressed to improve OPRA form/OPRAS?
10. If no, which system do you use to plan, manage and evaluate employees' performance?
11. Why is it that you do not use OPRAS?
12. How do you think training in OPRAS could be simplified?